



# Matt Cohen & Associates

Special Education, Disability Rights & Human Services Law

## **LAST CALL FOR SSCA: Deadline to accept cash payments for CPS students denied services during 2016-17 and 2017-18**

By William Hrabec, Attorney at Matt Cohen & Associates

Previous E-Newsletters have provided an overview of and updates on the Student Specific Corrective Action (SSCA) system that CPS is using to offer cash payments to students who were denied special education services due to illegal district policies during the 2016-17 and 2017-18 school years. As an active member of the Advocacy Group that brought the initial complaint against CPS to the Illinois State Board of Education in 2017-18, Matt Cohen & Associates continues to work directly with CPS, ISBE, and other advocates to ensure that students who were harmed by these policies receive a remedy through SSCA. Please [review our February E-Newsletter](#) for additional information about the development of SSCA.

The **deadline to file a claim is September 30, 2022**. Although this deadline has been extended in the past, it will **NOT** be extended beyond September 30. Approximately 9,000 claims have been filed since SSCA opened earlier this year, but there are still nearly 3,000 students who have not accepted the automatic remedy they are being offered by CPS. Check if your student is being offered a payment, and if so, file your claim today. **Payments range from \$800 to \$8000** depending on the type of service and number of years it was denied:

- \$800 per year for extended school year (ESY)
- \$1,250 per year for transportation
- \$2,000 per year for paraprofessional or lack of staff due to budgeting procedures
- \$4,000 per year for failure to identify a student for an IEP under specific learning disability (SLD).
- Students denied placement in a separate day school (therapeutic day school or TDS) can also get a remedy, but need to request an SSCA meeting or file an ISBE complaint to do so, as there is not a pre-set amount like the other categories.

These amounts can be combined if a student was denied multiple services, for up to \$4,000 per year for the two years.

If you or your student is being offered a cash payment through SSCA, **you must file a claim with CPS before the September 30, 2022 deadline.** Eligible students can file a claim at [www.cps-ssca.com](http://www.cps-ssca.com) using their Claim ID Number and PIN from CPS, which are being sent out by U.S. mail and in emails from the address [admin@cps-ssca.com](mailto:admin@cps-ssca.com). Be aware that these emails may be going to your spam, junk, or promotions folder.

If you have not received a Claim ID / PIN but think your student may be eligible, you should call the CPS SSCA Hotline at 773-553-1843, or email CPS at [ssca@cps.edu](mailto:ssca@cps.edu) to find out if your student is being offered a payment. Students not being offered a cash payment may still be able to get a remedy by filing an ISBE Complaint.

In order to accept the payment, you will have to agree to waive any claims that you have against CPS related to the violations that occurred during the 2016-17 and 2017-18 school years. If you don't understand what this means, have questions about your claim, or think your child deserves more than you are being offered, you should talk to an attorney before filing your claim. You should also talk to an attorney before filing a claim if you currently receive any public benefits, such as social security income (SSI), as accepting a cash payment may impact your eligibility for these programs. CPS is offering additional education services instead of cash payments for students/families who may have their public benefits impacted by a cash payment.

Please note that students offered a cash payment through SSCA actually may be entitled to more than what CPS initially offers. If you think the amount offered is not enough to make up for the denial of service for your student, or if your student was denied services in other SSCA areas that weren't identified, you should request and file an ISBE Complaint. Filing an ISBE Complaint is fairly quick and easy and will allow you to request an appropriate remedy for your child's specific situation, rather than accepting the standard remedy offered to everyone. As mentioned above, you should also file an ISBE Complaint if your child was not offered an automatic remedy but you think they should be eligible. If you want to file an ISBE Complaint, you must do it by September 30, 2022. Email [isbemonitor@isbe.net](mailto:isbemonitor@isbe.net) for more information.

If you have any questions about the claims process, call Equip for Equality at 312-895-7231 for more information. If you have broader questions about whether you might be eligible for additional remedies, you can also contact us (Matt Cohen & Associates) at 866-787-9270.